

P-Poe, Edgar
CIA 101 Turner, f
ORg Oversea
Writer Club

Agent Role Changing — CIA Chief Turner

By EDGAR POE

(Times-Picayune Washington Correspondent)

WASHINGTON — The revolution in intelligence gathering, with satellite photos and swift new means of communication, is having a marked effect on the American intelligence community, CIA Director Stansfield Turner said Thursday.

This does not mean that intelligence agents are not of paramount importance, but now they are just a part of this country's intelligence gathering system, Turner said.

Adm. Turner said the bits of intelligence gathering are now analyzed and reviewed immediately. He did not say he preferred technology over people, but emphasized at a meeting with the group Overseas Writers at the Capitol Hilton Hotel that the United States intelligence community can no longer conduct its affairs as it did 20 or 30 years ago.

Turner said he wished that Congress would amend one of its stipulations pertaining to the intelligence community. He said when the agency decides to employ an "overt" intelligence act it must report directly to seven separate congressional committees.

The CIA is not only interested in military affairs around the world, but also is interested in economic situations, politics, narcotics, and terrorist activities, among other things, Turner noted.

The real challenge for the CIA, he said, is to coordinate all of this country's intelligence capabilities.

The chief of the Central Intelligence Agency said substantial damage was done to the CIA in the 1974-76 period, but he felt it was regaining strength. He said the agency is trying to be more open with non-classified information than in the past.

The CIA is spending about \$5 billion on direct intelligence work in 1979. This outlay, of course, is in addition to the billions the Department of Defense spends for certain intelligence work.

Adm. Turner, appointed to the post by President Carter to succeed George Bush, is controversial in some circles. Many career CIA professionals have resigned since his reorganization took place. It is publicly known in Washington that a number of intelligence officers have departed.

Adm. Turner denied that the CIA made a major error in a report to President Carter that the Shah of Iran was not going to be overthrown.

Turner said he rejected the original report on Iran's revolution. He said it was "far too optimistic" and was "overbalanced." He said the CIA should not be criticized for the intelligence report, because he said he was confident that even the Shah of Iran did not believe he would be replaced.

One questioner asked Turner did he believe a report that a "mole" (double agent) was currently operating within the agency. He said flatly he did not believe it, but he realized the agency must always be on the alert.